



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 23 December 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
23 DECEMBER 1968

1. Middle East

Gromyko arrived in Cairo Saturday on a visit that appears to have been set up on short notice. It is conceivable his mission is to obtain some token of flexibility from Nasir that Moscow can use in its effort to get bilateral US-Soviet talks on the Middle East.

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Recent Soviet initiatives on the Middle East have shown little that is new, although the Russians apparently have dropped their earlier idea of a four-power conference with the US, Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain participating.

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2. France

While the sobering effects of the franc crisis and Czechoslovakia have left France a somewhat less persistent burr under the West's saddle, there still is no give on basic De Gaulle concepts. British accession to the European Economic Community, for instance.

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Meanwhile, we continue to note signs of sagging confidence in the government. No French politician seems prepared to challenge De Gaulle directly

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3. Nigeria

Ojukwu shows no inclination to give up, even though he has agreed to an eight-day truce covering Christmas and New Year's.

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4. Korea

Predictably, the North Koreans have all their transmitters working on their version of the Pueblo crew release. Contributing to the broadcast noise out of Pyongyang this morning is a prerelease "press conference" with the crew, a "letter of gratitude" from it, a foreign ministry statement, transcripts of the US "apology," and a cascade of the venomous verbosity that passes for news commentary. Thus far the North Koreans have chosen to ignore the repudiation of the "confession."

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of US
Political Attitudes



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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Relations With Prague Cool: A Czechoslovak [redacted] remarked [redacted] recently that relations between Hanoi and Prague were correct, but distinctly cool. The Czechoslovak said he had mentioned this to some Soviet colleagues and was told the North Vietnamese considered Czechoslovakia the "black sheep of the socialist camp."

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Tho's Christmas Greetings: Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the National Liberation Front, has sent a Christmas and New Year's message to the "American people." In the text broadcast by Hanoi's international service on 21 December, Tho expressed thanks for "your big efforts aiming to stop the war of aggression by the US." Tho went on to predict success in "the great struggle against the US Government's aggressive policy. The legitimate interests of our two peoples and the interests of world peace will certainly win complete victory."

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